

THE WAR DEPARTMENT

Commission on
Training Camp
Activities

*"I regard the work of the
Commission on Training Camp
Activities as a most significant
factor in winning the war."*

—NEWTON D. BAKER
Secretary of War

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE WAR DEPARTMENT

Commission on
Training Camp
Activities

WASHINGTON, D. C.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

https://archive.org/details/commissionontrai00unit_0

IN GENERAL

IN April, 1917, Secretary Baker appointed a Commission on Training Camp Activities under the Chairmanship of Raymond B. Fosdick of New York. The members, in addition to the Chairman, were Lee F. Hanmer of New York, Thomas J. Howells of Pittsburgh, Marc Klaw of New York, Joseph Lee of Boston, Malcolm L. McBride of Cleveland, Dr. John R. Mott of New York, Charles P. Neill of Washington, Lieut. Col. Palmer E. Pierce, U.S.A., and Dr. Joseph E. Raycroft of Princeton University. Jasper J. Mayer is Secretary to the Commission. To supply the normalities of life to nearly a million and a half young men in training camps, and to keep the environs of those camps clean and wholesome, was the two-fold task outlined for the Commission.

When one considers that these men in camp have left their families, homes and friends, their clubs, churches and college gatherings, their dances, their town libraries, athletic fields, theatres and movie houses—in fact, all the normal social relationships to which they have been accustomed—and have entered a strange new life in which everything is necessarily subordinated to the

need of creating an efficient fighting force, the importance of the Commission's work becomes apparent. An army in fighting trim is a contented army; contentment for the average man cannot be maintained without the normal relations of life.

The task of this Commission, therefore, is to re-establish, as far as possible, the old social ties—to furnish these young men a substitute for the recreational and relaxational opportunities to which they have been accustomed—in brief, to rationalize, as far as it can be done, the bewildering environment of a war camp. It is also for the Commission to prevent and suppress certain vicious conditions traditionally associated with armies and training camps.

To a great extent the Commission has employed in these two important activities the machinery of organizations and agencies heretofore interested along such lines. Except where necessary, it has not created any new machinery.

To the Young Men's Christian Association and the Knights of Columbus, for instance, the Commission has looked to supply a large share of the club life and entertainment inside the training camps. To the American Library Association it has instinctively turned for an

adequate supply of books and reading facilities for the troops. To organize the social and recreational life of the communities adjacent to the training camps the Commission enlisted the services of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, which has placed representatives in over one hundred such communities and has harnessed the lodges, churches, clubs, and other local groups and organizations with the men in the camps. So, too, such agencies as the Travelers' Aid Society and the Young Men's Christian Association have been brought into play in connection with the community problem.

Suppressive work in dealing with vicious conditions is handled by direct representatives of the Commission, with whom are co-operating such organizations as the Committee of Fourteen of New York, the Watch and Ward Society of New England, the Committee of Fifteen of Chicago, the Bureau of Social Hygiene of New York, and the American Social Hygiene Association. Local police organizations and sheriffs, as well as the machinery of the Department of Justice and the Military Provost Guards, have been utilized in this work. The special problem arising from the presence of young girls in the vicinity of the camps is handled by the Young

Women's Christian Association and by a Committee on Protective Work attached to the Commission.

Within the camps, in addition to the facilities already mentioned, the Commission has appointed sports-directors, boxing instructors, song leaders, and dramatic entertainment managers. Theatres are being erected in each cantonment for the exhibition of regular dramatic performances, and special facilities have been provided for the production of moving pictures, vaudeville, and other forms of amusement. Divisional exchange officers, appointed by the Commission, one in each camp, are superintending the operation of the regimental Post Exchanges, or soldiers' co-operative stores.

This constitutes a brief résumé of the machinery by which the Commission is accomplishing its work. To meet its expenses, Congress has made an appropriation. The size of its task is evidenced by the fact that its activities have to do with all classes of camps and cantonments under the jurisdiction of the War Department. Some of these camps contain as many as 50,000 men, and the problem of arranging and ordering their leisure-time opportunities must be promptly and effectively met. The following pages describe more in detail what progress has been made along each particular line up to October 15, when this pamphlet went to press.

INSIDE THE CAMP

The Young Men's Christian Association

(Dr. John R. Mott in charge)

BECAUSE of its experience in army and navy work, the Young Men's Christian Association, upon recommendation by the Commission on Training Camp Activities, was given official recognition as one of the agencies for furnishing recreational facilities within the camps. It works in close co-operation with the Commission. All its entertainments are free of charge—all absolutely non-sectarian.

From nine to fourteen recreational and social buildings are being erected in each of the National Army cantonments, and in each of the National Guard Camps at least six buildings. These include, in each National Army cantonment, an auditorium seating three thousand. Up to September 21st contracts for three hundred and sixty-two buildings had been let. Almost all will be completed by the time cantonment construction is done.

Over one hundred and fifty tents, 40 x 80 feet, and four hundred special outfits or equipments for Associa-

tion purposes also have been provided. Each outfit includes, among other things, a piano, motion picture machine, phonograph, office supplies, postcards, pens, ink, pencils, stationery, reading matter, etc.—all free. It is estimated that the service of the Young Men's Christian Association in American training camps in the next nine months will cost eleven million dollars. This money is furnished by private subscription.

3,000 MEN SOON IN ITS SERVICE

Already over two thousand war work secretaries are in the field under appointment. Another thousand will soon be added. These men include physical directors, educational directors, etc. It is the aim of the organization to supply every service for which there is a demand. The Young Men's Christian Association secretary has come to be the "big brother" of the troops.

THE ENTERTAINMENT FEATURES

The program planned for Association buildings and auditoriums within the camps includes motion pictures, professional programs, and other forms of entertainment, such as mass singing, amateur dramatics, etc. The plan for motion pictures involves the presentation of from eight million to ten million feet of film a week. This

service is provided at actual cost by the Community Motion Picture Bureau. A weekly newspaper of eight pages, "In Trench and Camp," is being published under the general auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association, for each of the thirty-two National Guard and National Army camps.

The Association buildings are freely placed at the disposal of army chaplains for religious services. The same building is often used in turn for Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish services.

The Knights of Columbus and Other Organizations

Just as the Young Men's Christian Association represents the Protestant denominations, which will constitute roughly sixty per cent. of the new army, so the Knights of Columbus represent the Catholic denomination, which will constitute perhaps thirty-five per cent. of the army. While this latter society is a fraternal organization, it will sustain exactly the same relation to the camps as is sustained by the Young Men's Christian Association, and will hold no meetings to which all

the troops in the camp are not invited, regardless of religious or other preference. Indeed, the admission of both these societies to military reservations was upon the condition that they would not limit their activities to a particular constituency, and that their buildings would at all times and for all meetings be open to the entire camp. The Young Men's Hebrew Association in its recreational work has identified itself with the Young Men's Christian Association.

DETAILS OF THEIR FACILITIES

There were in October 15, 1917, sixty-five Knights of Columbus halls completed and in operation in the various training camps. Fifty secretaries were at work, and it is estimated that within a few weeks two hundred and fifty representatives of the Knights of Columbus will be ministering to the general welfare and comfort of the soldiers in training camps.

Each Knights of Columbus hall is equipped with reading desks, benches, folding chairs, phonographs, player-pianos, moving picture apparatus, athletic equipment, and facilities for other entertainment. If there is a demand, debating and literary societies will be organized.

The American Library Association

The Commission asked the American Library Association to undertake the important task of furnishing books, magazines and general library facilities, as well as trained librarians, to the men in the camps. A special library building is planned for each National Army camp and National Guard camp. Indeed, these buildings are already in process of construction and more than one million dollars has been raised by the Association to carry on the work.

The aims of the American Library Association are:

First, that librarians and library facilities be available for soldiers and sailors wherever assembled.

Second, that the libraries be maintained in such a way that not only will reading matter be available for the largest number of soldiers, but that every possible encouragement and stimulus will be given to reading by the men in the service of the country.

The Knights of Columbus halls, the Young Men's Christian Association buildings, the regimental Post Exchanges, as well as the barrack buildings, are used as distributing centers in the camps, the idea being to have a good book within reach of the soldier whenever he wants one.

Recreative Athletic Work

(*Dr. Joseph E. Raycroft in charge*)

A comprehensive organization is being developed in each of the cantonments to encourage the *largest possible* number of soldiers to participate regularly in some form of athletics during their leisure time. Special stress is laid on hard competitive sports that develop the fighting instinct.

The responsibility for the organization and conduct of these recreative athletics in each camp is in the hands of a skilled organizer and coach who is officially recognized as a civilian aide on the staff of the Commanding Officer. His salary is paid from Government funds. Thirty such sports-directors have been appointed by the Commission and assigned to posts. The supervision of this work in each camp involves the creation of a Divisional Athletic Council, supplemented by regimental councils, and by such organization among the companies as may be necessary. The sports-directors in the National Army camps will be assisted by boxing instructors, fifteen of whom have already been appointed. They will also co-operate with the representatives of the Young Men's Christian Association and the Knights of Columbus assigned to athletic work in the camps.

SPECIAL STRESS ON BOXING

Special emphasis is laid on boxing, not only because it is an excellent sport, but because of its intimate connection with bayonet fighting. A committee under the Commission has been appointed to advise on this matter, consisting of James J. Corbett, Norman Selby (Kid McCoy), Robert Edgren, Richard Melligan, and Michael Donovan. The boxing instructors in the camps will train specially detailed groups of men who have had previous knowledge of this sport to become assistant instructors. Frequent boxing contests will be held. To standardize instruction and to give the troops a better idea of the work, a set of moving pictures has been made to demonstrate the fundamental principles of boxing and the elements of bayonet practice.

EQUIPMENT

Baseballs, bats, basket balls, soccer balls, boxing gloves, etc., will be supplied each company in the camps. The Government has made a small appropriation for the purchase of this equipment. This appropriation amounts to only about one-tenth of the money that will be required, and supplementary funds, therefore, will be necessary. The minimum athletic equipment planned for each soldier in the army will cost seventy-five cents.

The Post Exchange or Soldiers' Co-Operative Store

(Mr. Malcolm L. McBride in charge)

One of the most important activities within the camp, which the War Department has asked the Commission on Training Camp Activities to organize, is the Post Exchange. There the soldier buys tobacco, handkerchiefs, soap, candy, and other articles not provided by the Government. At the sixteen National Army cantonments, which comprise eight or nine full regiments, a Post Exchange for each regiment has been established. In each camp there is a Division Exchange Officer, selected by the Commission, who, under the direction of the Commanding Officer, has general supervision over all Post Exchanges. Any profits accumulating to the Post Exchanges are expended in a way decided upon by the votes of the men in the regiment.

National Army divisions will have eventually thirteen to eighteen exchanges each, according to local conditions. At present the divisions average ten exchanges each in operation—some of them in temporary quarters. The gross daily business of each division is now running about \$5,000, at a conservative estimate.

Camp Music

(*Mr. Lee F. Hanmer in charge*)

In order to develop singing in the Army, the Commission has adopted the expedient of appointing song leaders in the various camps and cantonments. The plan is to extend this work until every camp in the United States is supplied with a competent leader. Appropriations for this activity have been approved by Congress.

The results have been extraordinary, and Commanding Officers are uniformly enthusiastic over the idea of sending a singing army to France. As an illustration of the effect of the work of the song leaders, the following quotation is given from the letter of an officer:

"Between five and six thousand men participated in the most inspiring evening I have ever enjoyed. When everybody sang 'The Battle Hymn of the Republic' and Harry Barnhart got the soldiers emphasizing 'Glory! Glory! Hallelujah! His Truth is Marching on!' you should have seen the faces glowing under the lights. The camp became inspired. The men cheered and cheered. Then the Southern boys called for 'Carry Me Back to Old Virginny' and 'My Old Kentucky

Home.' Then we sang 'A Perfect Day' and 'My Hero.' Then they called for 'Old Black Joe.' The harmony was wonderful. Automobiles way out on the road tooted their horns, and it was ten minutes before the enthusiasm subsided. We sang from eight o'clock until ten o'clock, and ended with the 'Star Spangled Banner.' I have never heard this song SUNG before. The Commanding Officer came forward after the singing and said it was the greatest thing he had ever listened to."

To co-operate with the commission in this important work the National Committee on Army and Navy Camp Music was created. The chairman is W. Kirkpatrick Brice of New York; the other members—M. Morgenthau, Jr., of New York, John Alden Carpenter of Chicago and Mrs. George Barrelle of Buffalo. Miss Frances F. Brundage, Supervisor of the Chicago Civic Music Association, was granted an indefinite leave of absence to become executive secretary of the committee.

A committee of camp song leaders has compiled a song book, which has been published under the title *Songs of the Soldiers and Sailors*. This book has been printed and is sold at cost through the Post Exchanges.

Dramatic Entertainment

(Mr. Marc Klaw in charge)

A fully equipped modern theatre building seating three thousand people is being built in each of the sixteen National Army camps.

A committee of theatrical managers and others, whose chairman is Mr. Marc Klaw of Klaw & Erlanger, is assisting in the organization of the talent for the program to be given in these buildings, and in the booking and management throughout the camps. Many of the foremost theatrical stars of the country are booked. These entertainments are planned to begin early in November.

An admission charge of 15c, 20, and 25c, will be made. From the proceeds the expenses of the entertainment will be paid, the balance to remain as a government fund to finance non-revenue-producing activities within the camps. The plan is to make the admission fee such as just to cover running expenses. A representative of the Commission will be in charge of each of those auditoriums and will be responsible for the program. The theatres are so planned that they can be used for various recreational and educational activities at any time, winter or summer.

GENERAL COMMITTEE HEADS ASSISTING MARC KLAU

David Belasco	George M. Cohan
A. L. Erlanger	Irving Berlin
Lee Shubert	John L. Golden
E. F. Albee	A. H. Woods
Gatti-Casazza	W. L. Lillard
Sam Scribner	Arthur Hopkins
Henry W. Savage	Arch Selwyn
Arthur Hammerstein	F. Richard Anderson
Sam H. Harris	Joseph Klaw

CLUB AFFILIATIONS

THE LAMBS, William Courtney
THE FRIARS, George M. Cohan
THE PLAYERS, John Drew
ACTORS' EQUITY, Francis Wilson
NATIONAL VAUDEVILLE CLUB, Willard Mack

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION TICKETS, ETC.

Stage Women's War Relief

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Otto Kahn, *Chairman*

George F. Baker	Clarence H. Mackay
George Gordon Battle	Thomas W. Lamont
James M. Beck	Prof. Brander Matthews
August Belmont	W. Forbes Morgan
Paul D. Cravath	Frederic R. Coudert
William A. Delano	Prof. H. Fairfield Osborn
Chas. Dana Gibson	Chas. H. Sabin
Daniel Guggenheim	Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler
Augustus D. Juillard	Francis Lynde Stetson
Alvin W. Krech	George W. Wickersham

Redpath Entertainments

(Mr. Lee F. Hammer in charge)

By arrangement with the Redpath Lyceum Bureau a tent in each National Army and National Guard camp has been erected and a first-class program of plays and entertainments provided. They are being operated on a cost basis. Accounts will be audited by the Commission and any surplus receipts will be turned over to the Post Exchanges.

Entertainment Concessions

In general no concessions to private amusement enterprises are permitted within the camps. In a few camps, however, where on account of transit or other local conditions access is not to be had to amusements in neighboring cities, concessions have been approved by the Commission for motion picture and vaudeville entertainments to be conducted within privately erected theatres within the camps. A percentage of the profits of such entertainments go to the Post Exchange, and the entertainments themselves are under the close supervision of the Commanding Officers. Only a few such concessions to private enterprises have been granted.

Educational Work

A committee on education, attached to the Commission, has been appointed, consisting of the following:

DR. WILLIAM ORR, *Chairman*; DR. P. P. CLAXTON of the Bureau of Education, Department of the Interior; DR. HARRY PRATT JUDSON, President of the University of Chicago; DR. JOHN H. FINLEY of the University of New York; COL. P. H. CALLAHAN of Louisville.

This committee has provided means for giving adequate courses in the French language and in French geography in all the cantonments and National Guard training camps. These courses are entirely optional and are given at such hours as military duties and regulations permit. Under this plan any soldier can, during the time of his training, readily acquire a vocabulary of six or seven hundred French words, and a knowledge of French geography and customs which will be of great assistance to him abroad. In addition the committee is planning to provide means for giving courses in any subject for which there is a demand. Instruction in the English language has been found necessary in connection with some soldiers drafted from our foreign population.

The committee is utilizing in its work the machinery not only of university extension courses but particularly of the educational department of the Y. M. C. A. It is prepared to utilize any educational machinery which can readily be adapted to its purpose.

OUTSIDE THE CAMP

The Playground and Recreation Association of America

(Mr. Joseph Lee in charge)

EXPERIENCE has shown that the instinctive desire of a soldier with an hour of free time is to go to town, even if the town is only a cross-roads. To make the communities adjacent to the training camps the best possible places for the soldiers in their free time—to organize the social and recreational facilities of the towns so that they shall meet every need and contribute to the mental, moral, and physical health of the men in the training camps—that is the work which the Playground and Recreation Association of America is undertaking under the direction of the Commission.

WORKING IN A HUNDRED COMMUNITIES

Nearly one hundred communities are being helped in their efforts to prepare for the thousands of men in camp near them. Eighty-seven representatives of the

Playground and Recreation Association of America are now at work in these cities.

The recreation provided must be clean, wholesome and plentiful. It must be made possible for the troops to meet the men and women of the town, so as to provide an antidote for the homesickness, depression, and social loneliness, which are so real a menace to the morale of the men. The community organizers, representing the Commission, are stirring the cities near the camps to a realization of their responsibility toward the troops who are their guests. The slogan is not "What can we make out of the soldiers?" but, "What can we do for the soldiers?"

HOW THE RESULTS ARE OBTAINED

Each of the local community representatives, through the organization of a central committee (with a number of sub-committees) co-ordinates the activities of each agency and group of people touching and controlling in any way the recreational resources of the town. Churches and fraternal orders are being stimulated to entertain their own soldier membership. Socials and dances are being arranged, where the troops may meet the young women of the community. Entertainment of

the soldiers in the homes of the citizens is one of the most popular features of the hospitality program. "Take a soldier home for dinner" has become a slogan. On one Sunday in a single community five thousand men were thus entertained.

The public resources of the cities, such as swimming pools, shower baths and baseball fields, have been placed at the disposal of the men. Provision is being made for the comfort of the soldiers and their guests through the installation of comfort stations and drinking fountains, and through the listing of available hotels and lodging houses. Rest rooms and "khaki clubs" are being established; directories of points of interest and places of amusement are being published. Automobile rides for the soldiers, community "sings" and band concerts are being given. In every way possible the cities' resources are being made available for the troops in their leisure time.

ASSISTANCE BY THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION—HOSTESS HOUSES

Much is done also to serve the soldiers' families who visit the camps. The assistance of the Travelers' Aid Society has been enlisted, and the Young Women's

Christian Association has been asked to establish "hostess houses" within the confines of each camp. Five of the "hostess houses" have already been completed, and twenty-three more are being built. Their purpose is to afford a place within the camp where a soldier can meet his family and friends.

The girls of the community, through the Young Women's Christian Association and other agencies, have been organized into clubs and patriotic leagues, with the object of keeping them occupied in hospital and patriotic pursuits.

THE CONTROL OF ALCOHOL AND PROSTITUTION

THE problem of suppressing vice and the sale of alcohol to soldiers at or near army camps, in accordance with Sections 12 and 13 of the Military Draft Law, is being attacked from many angles and with varied agencies.

The first and prime requisite is the gathering of full and accurate information as to actual conditions in the neighborhood of the camps. The machinery for gathering this information has included the field agents of the Commission, the field men of the Department of Justice, the Intelligence Department of the Army, the local provost guards, as well as the staffs of such organizations as the National American Social Hygiene Association, the Committee of Fourteen of New York, the Committee of Fifteen of Chicago, the Watch and Ward Society of New England, and the Bureau of Social Hygiene of New York.

The information thus received has been utilized by the Commission, sometimes from Washington and some-

times through the representatives in the field, to secure improvement in moral conditions where such improvement was needed.

A direct representative of the Commission is now located in the vicinity of every National Army and National Guard Camp, and continuous investigations are in progress. The work of these representatives is checked by supervisors for given districts, who also control the work in the smaller specialized camps.

THE RESULTS ACCOMPLISHED

As concrete examples of what has been accomplished may be mentioned the closing of Red Light Districts in the following cities: Deming, N. M., El Paso, Waco, San Antonio, Fort Worth, and Houston, Texas; Hattiesburg, Miss.; Spartanburg, S. C.; Norfolk and Petersburg, Va.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Alexandria, La.; Savannah, Ga.; Charleston, Columbia and Greenville, S. C.; Douglas, Ariz.; Louisville, Ky.; and Montgomery, Ala. New Orleans has passed an ordinance which will wipe out its Red Light District on or about November 15th. Many cities in which no Red Light Districts were formally tolerated have, at the instance of the Commission, abolished their open houses of prostitution.

STATE AID

In addition, the laws against vice have been strengthened in many cities at the suggestion of the Commission's representatives, and the machinery for the enforcement of those laws has been geared up to a higher notch of efficiency. In California and Arkansas, State Military Welfare Commissions have been appointed by the Governors of those states, at the instigation of representatives of this Commission, and executive secretaries have been appointed to carry on the work of vice repression.

SEX HYGIENE WORK

A wide educational campaign along lines of sex hygiene has been undertaken in all the camps, through the agency of the American Social Hygiene Association and the Young Men's Christian Association. Lectures, moving pictures, and exhibits of various kinds are utilized, and an extensive literature has been developed. Educational work has also been undertaken in the adjacent communities, and the widest possible use is made of pamphlets and other literature to impress upon the communities the policy of absolute repression which the War Department has adopted.

COMMITTEE ON PROTECTIVE WORK FOR GIRLS

The problem created by the presence of young girls in the neighborhood of training camps has proved so great that a special committee under the Commission has been formed to urge the appointment of women protective officers in every community adjacent to a military camp and to handle the many reformatory questions associated with delinquency. This committee, under the chairmanship of Miss Maude Miner of New York, consists of Mrs. Martha P. Falconer of Philadelphia, Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., of New York, Mrs. James Cushman of New York, and Mrs. William Dummer of Chicago. A training school for women protective officers, under Miss Miner's direction, has been opened in New York, and every effort is being made to supply the rapidly growing demand for trained workers of this kind.

THE Navy Department Commission on Training Camp Activities is distinct from the War Department Commission and covers a different field of work. It was appointed by Secretary Daniels in July, 1917, and consists of the following:

RAYMOND B. FOSDICK, *Chairman*

LIEUT. RICHARD E. BYRD, U.S.N., *Secretary*

CLIFFORD W. BARNES	BARTON MYERS
WALTER CAMP	CHARLES P. NEILL
SELAH CHAMBERLAIN	MRS. HELEN RING ROBINSON
JOHN J. EAGAN	MRS. FINLEY SHEPARD
JOSEPH LEE	MRS. DAISY McLAURIN STEVENS
E. T. MEREDITH	JOHN S. TICHENOR

A pamphlet descriptive of its activities will shortly be published.

**Additional copies of this booklet can
be obtained upon application to the
Commission on Training Camp
Activities, Room 149, Old Land Office
Building, Washington, D. C.**